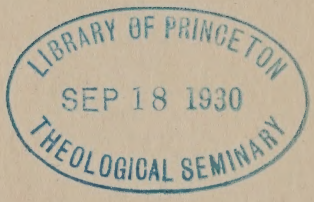
FIFTY-TWO STORY TALKS TO BOYS AND GIRLS

REV. HOWARD J. CHIDLEY



BV 4315 .C53 1929
Chidley, Howard James, 1878-
Fifty-two talks to boys and
girls

FIFTY-TWO STORY TALKS

HOWARD J. CHIDLEY

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
SEP 18 1930
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Fifty-Two Story Talks

TO BOYS AND GIRLS

BY
REV. HOWARD J. CHIDLEY, B. D.
PASTOR TRINITY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,
EAST ORANGE, NEW JERSEY

GARDEN CITY NEW YORK
DOUBLEDAY, DORAN & COMPANY, INC.
1929

Copyright, 1914, by
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

C
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO
MY DAUGHTER
Elizabeth

FOREWORD

No DEPARTMENT of Christian literature is of more importance for the future of the Church than that which seeks to enlist the children in the service of Christ. Mr. Chidley, by his gifts and experience as a pastor and a teacher of the young, is eminently fitted to contribute towards this most vital phase of Christian activity. His successful career in the Central Congregational Church of Brooklyn, where I shared the privilege of his valuable co-operation, and in the Trinity Church of East Orange, New Jersey, of which he is now the beloved and honored pastor, bespeak the merits of this series of addresses to Boys and Girls. They are at once an efficient protest against the Protestant neglect of the young and a remedy for that neglect. Parents, instructors, and guardians of the juvenile members of our Churches will be wise to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the teachings and exhortations presented here. It

is a book of absorbing interest, and the little folks and those of older years can not fail to be both profited and delighted by it. The revolution in Christian thought concerning the relation of children to the Church and the Kingdom of God is apparent on every page. Dr. Martineau averred that children do not require to be led so much as not to be misled, and in these "Fifty-two Stories" we have a model application of his weighty aphorism. The receptive and expansive hours of child nature are admirably considered, and what is here written has a direct bearing upon its spiritual development and welfare.

S. PARKES CADMAN.

The Parish House,
Central Congregational Church,
Brooklyn, N. Y., March 2, 1914.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION,	xiii
A BIBLE RIDDLE,	3
CLOSED GATES,	6
HIRING A COACHMAN,	9
THE FIERCEST THING IN THE BIBLE,	11
SACRIFICE HITS,	13
THE LIBERTY OF OBEDIENCE,	15
CUTTING CORNERS,	18
HABITS,	20
A LESSON IN COURTESY,	23
LITTLE FOXES,	25
A TRICKY OX,	28
"SHINE INSIDE,"	30
THE STORM KING EAGLE,	33
A DOG WHICH ATE THE BIBLE,	35
STEAM AND SAILS,	37
A FISH-STORY,	39
OPPORTUNITY,	41
GOD IS NOW HERE,	43

PAGE

David Livingstone's Faith, - - - 45
The Happy Man, - - - - - 47
A Sermon for the Boys, - - - - 49
Tire-Trouble, - - - - - 51
Watching for Idle Boys, - - - - 53
Christ and the Dog, - - - - 55
The Boy Who Was to be Manager, - 58
A Tale About Words, - - - - 61
Suffocated Trees, - - - - - 64
Ulysses and the Sirens, - - - 66
Poison-Labels, - - - - - - 68
Lies that Walk, - - - - - 71
Wellington and the Soldier, - - - 73
Abraham's Guest, - - - - - 75
About Generosity, - - - - - 78
Sun and Wind, - - - - - 80
The Boy and the Turtle, - - - 82
The Boy and the Nickel, - - - 84
The Three Fates, - - - - - 86
The Inch-Worm and the Mountain, - 88
The French Drummer-Boy, - - - 91
A King in the Stuff, - - - - 93
Bread and Wine, - - - - - 96

PAGE

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CAROL, - - - 98

A HINT FROM A CARIBOU, - - - 100

THE REPENTANCE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON, - 103

EASTER, - - - - - - - - 105

THE WHISPERING GALLERY, - - - 108

THE HE-SAID GIRL, - - - - 111

ON DECK, - - - - - - - 113

THE TERROR BY NIGHT, - - - - 116

THE BRAMBLE BUSH KING, - - - - 119

WHERE IS HEAVEN? - - - - 122

THE CHRISTIAN ARMY, - - - - - 124

INTRODUCTION

In a certain Western university the president receives a salary of ten thousand dollars a year for training young men and young women, while not many miles distant from that university is a stock-farm the superintendent of which receives a salary of twelve thousand dollars for training high-bred colts. That colt-trainer is at hand when the colt is foaled, and before it rises to its feet has rubbed down its head and put a halter upon it, so that from birth it shall be accustomed to the feeling of the halter.

From that time the training of the colt is not suspended for a moment. If in training it to travel in harness a piece of paper should blow across the training-course, causing the colt to shy, an assistant holds the paper on the opposite side of the road, so that the animal shall have the kink taken out of its nervous system and its tendency to shy again in the same direction be at once corrected.

The old method was to allow a colt to run wild until two or three years of age, then "break it in." The result was apt to be either a "cowed" animal or a nervous horse.

Would that we were manifesting as much wisdom in the religious training of our children as that horse-trainer. But unfortunately we are pursuing largely the old method, allowing our children to get full of all sorts of mental kinks up through those first plastic three or four years, and then handing them over to the church kindergarten-teacher for one hour a week, expecting her to straighten out all these aberrations and give back to the parents a normally religious child.

Many parents seem to assume that the child's brain is lying dormant during those first few years, when, as a matter of fact, the child's mind during these years is most receptive, and expanding at a rate never after equalled. The nervous system is receiving impressions which, though in after-years the child has no *conscious* memory of it, are yet indelibly chiselled there for good or ill.

It is high time that parents and religious teachers took more cognizance than they do of this fact.

There are other parents who deliberately refuse to give their children any religious training during this period for fear of "unduly influencing" them from the religious standpoint. This point of view is stated, whether seriously or not, in the following quotation from a recent writer: "I think it is a bad thing to be what is known as 'brought up,' do n't you? Why should we—poor, helpless little children, all soft and resistless—be squeezed and jammed into the iron bands of parental points of view? Why should we have points of view at all? Why not for those few divine years when we are still so near God, leave us just to wonder? We are not given a chance. On our pulpy little minds our parents carve their opinions, and the mass slowly hardens, and all those deep, narrow, up-and-down strokes harden with it, and the first thing the best of us have to do on growing up is to waste precious time beating at the things, to try to

get them out. Surely the child of the most admirable and wise parents is richer with his own faulty but original point of view than he would be fitted out with the choicest selections of maxims and conclusions that he did not have to think out for himself. I could never be a schoolmistress. I should be afraid to teach the children. They know more than I do. They know how to be happy, how to live from day to day, in godlike indifference to what may come next. And is not trying to be happy the secret we spend our lives trying to guess? Why, then, should I, by forcing them to look through my stale eyes, show them, as through a dreadful magnifying-glass, the terrific possibilities, the cruel explosiveness of what they had been lightly tossing across the daisies, and thinking they were only toys?"

All of which sounds very pretty, but when simmered down, the wisdom, if wisdom it be, of a statement like that can be compressed into the old adage, "Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise." But the point is that the world has pretty generally come to the conclu-

sion that bliss is not necessarily the most healthful thing, either for adults or children. "Soft and resistless!" Precisely, there is the crux. If these "soft and resistless" minds do not receive good impressions they will receive bad ones, and it is the part of wisdom to get the good in first. Where a mind is "to let," some sort of tenant is sure to occupy.

Coleridge put the case in a nutshell when an English deist inveighed bitterly against the rigid instruction of Christian homes. The deist said: "Consider the helplessness of a little child. Before it has wisdom or judgment to decide for itself, it is prejudiced in favour of Christianity. How selfish is the parent who stamps his religious ideas into a child's receptive nature, as a moulder stamps the hot iron with his model! I shall prejudice my children neither for Christianity nor for Buddhism, nor for Atheism, but allow them to wait for their mature years. Then they can open the question and decide for themselves." Later Coleridge led his friend into the garden, and then whimsically exclaimed: "How selfish is the

gardener to ruthlessly stamp his prejudice in favour of roses, violets and strawberries into a receptive garden-bed. The time was when in April I pulled up the young weeds,—the parsley, the thistles,—and planted the garden-beds out with vegetables and flowers. Now I have decided to permit the garden to go until September. Then the black clods can choose for themselves between cockleburrs, currants and strawberries." The deist saw the point.

Another weakness in our system of religious training for children is manifest at the adolescence-period of the child. We have been in the habit of allowing the child to consider the Bible-school as his church. We send him to the Bible-school in his very early years, but make no demands upon him as far as specific church-attendance is concerned. And at the kindergarten-period we are probably wise in this; for after the child has attended kindergarten for an hour, it is too great a tax upon him to require him to sit through an hour's church-service. But after the kindergarten-period it seems to me the plain duty of parents to en-

courage the child to attend church, though not necessarily for the entire service; for if the child does not establish a church-going *habit* during these plastic years, the probability is that he will never form it. This partially explains why there is such a leakage between the Bible-school and the church. When the child gets "too old for Bible-school," not having formed the church-going habit, he is stranded

> "Between two worlds,
> One dead, the other powerless to be born."

And the result is he drifts away from the Church.

In the endeavour to remedy this situation in his own Church it has been the custom of the writer to have all children from seven to twelve years of age in the Bible-school, which meets on Sunday morning before church, attend the morning worship for the first fifteen minutes. During this time they hear the Call to Worship, the Invocation, the Lord's Prayer, the Children's Sermon, and the Anthem by the choir. At the close of the anthem the children

file out with their teachers as the adult congregation rises for the Responsive Lesson. In this way the children are establishing a church-going habit, with the result that they early begin to feel that something is wrong on Sunday if they have not been to church.

A word as to the content of the sermons preached. I believe that a child's religion ought to be largely of the motor type. That is, it should be concerned with getting religion into the child's hands and feet. In other words, it should seek to establish in him a habit of right-doing. For this reason his religion should be of the most practical sort, leaving the theory to come later. He should have sufficient theological pegs to hang his morality on, but he should be troubled little with dogma. For this reason his religion will probably have largely to do with the here and now. He cannot be much interested in an other-worldly religion. The normal child at this period will not sing with any great enthusiasm "I want to be an angel." For this world is to him just then a very interesting and fascinating place. He is for that

reason ready also to admire men of action, and is wide open for the influences of hero-worship. And while he cannot be argued into being a Christian, for he is not sufficiently awake to logic; and while he cannot be coerced, for he possesses the dynamic of a locomotive combined with the resistance of a mule, he can be magnetized into being a Christian if there is set as his teacher and example a virile, magnetic man. The boy will open his soul to him as he does his windows to welcome the breath of May. Such considerations as these have determined the content of these sermons.

The author makes no claim to originality for much of the material presented, but he has given a new setting to old truths, a setting which experience has proved to be interesting to the children of his own congregation.

It may seem that the wording of some of these sermons is beyond the grasp of the children for whom it was intended. Two things are to be noted in this connection. First, a child resents being talked down to. He soon detects a condescending smile and mock affability in a

speaker. And when he detects these he closes the door of his heart against the message. Second, it is better to give the child something to grow to, provided it is not too far beyond his grasp. But here again experience is the best criterion. The children who have heard these sermons have enjoyed them, and have carried their substance and lessons home with them to repeat to older ears.

They are offered to the public, therefore, in the hope that they may suggest a method, add a little to the scant supply of material for children's sermons, and serve to interest other children as well. H. J. C.

Orange, New Jersey.

FIFTY-TWO STORY TALKS TO BOYS AND GIRLS

A BIBLE-RIDDLE

Boys and girls are all fond of riddles, and I am sure you will be surprised to know that there is one of the best riddles of all in the Bible, one that is very hard to guess, and yet one that has a fine lesson in it when I tell you the answer.

This riddle was told by Samson on his wedding-day, and nobody would ever have guessed it if his wife had not let the secret out.

But first I must tell where Samson got his riddle. Well, one day with his father and mother he was walking down the road to the land where the Philistines lived. And according to the story, a young lion rushed out at him from behind some bushes, and Samson, being a very strong man, broke its jaws and killed it, and left its carcass behind some bushes by the roadside.

Some time afterward he was going down that road again, and he turned aside to see

what had become of the carcass. And what do you think he found there? This: a swarm of wild bees had made their nest in that carcass. Now, Samson was fond of honey, and he took the comb of honey with him and ate it as he walked along the road. And as he walked he made up this riddle: "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." That means that out of this lion which would have eaten him up he got something to eat, and out of this strong beast he got something sweet.

I suppose you will wonder what sort of lesson for boys and girls anyone can draw from that. You say you will never meet a lion on the roadside.

I am not so sure of that. I think boys and girls meet things every day that are very much like lions. Of course, in these days we call them temptations. But, then, they jump out at you very suddenly and unexpectedly sometimes. And they would devour your souls just as this lion would have eaten up Samson had he not killed it. And when you kill a temptation by

not giving way to it you can make a riddle just like Samson, and you can say, too, "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." For just like Samson, every time you come to the place where you have overcome a temptation,—it may be to say unkind things, or to be quick-tempered, or to be hateful,—you will find that you will be stronger to overcome it next time. And the remembrance of how you were able to overcome your feelings will be sweet, just as that honey was to Samson. God says that if we trust Him, "the young lion shall ye trample under foot."

CLOSED GATES

If any of you boys and girls, while riding through a great city on an express train, ever chance to put your head out of the car-window and look forward along the tracks, you will see several blocks ahead of the train people in carriages, on foot, and in street-cars crossing the railway-tracks in great numbers, and it seems as if the train would have to stop, or else it would run over somebody. But the train never slackens speed. The engineer keeps on blowing the whistle, and the train thunders along at the usual rate.

Then you will notice when you get near those crossings that all the gates are down and the railway-tracks are perfectly clear.

That is the way with many of the difficulties we face in life. We set out to do the thing our conscience tells us to do, and it seems as if the road were full of obstructions. But you just go straight ahead, determined to do your duty,

and lo, the hindrances disappear. When an earnest man goes right ahead, the crowd usually opens up to let him through.

As you get older and face the world you will find it looks like a great, fierce giant. But really its fierce look is caused by a false-face that it wears to frighten faint-hearted people. You go boldly up and take hold of his beard, as David faced the giant, and you will be surprised to find that not only the beard but the whole mask comes off in your hands, and there is a kindly countenance behind. For the world would rather see you succeed than fail.

I heard of a young man the other day who went into an office in Chicago to sell a bill of goods. The man behind the desk was very brusque and fierce-looking, and snapped out, "Well, what do you want here?"

The young man promptly replied, "I want first to be treated as a gentleman, and then I may talk business to you."

The other man dropped his fierce manner at once, and the young man sold him a large bill of goods. The man behind the desk told

him when he was leaving that he greeted strangers fiercely to try their mettle, and if they ran away he concluded they were n't worth troubling with anyhow.

And so I say to you, boys and girls, be sure in your own minds that you are doing right, then go boldly ahead, and you will find the gates down and the tracks clear. Let this be your motto:

"Silken-handed stroke a nettle,
And it stings you for your pains.
Grasp it like a man of mettle,
And it soft as silk remains."

HIRING A COACHMAN

THERE is a story that tells of a man who advertised for a coachman, and three men answered the advertisement. They all made a good appearance, and the man was at a loss to know which one to choose.

Finally he hit upon this scheme. There was a road near his house that ran along the edge of a precipice. The man asked each one of these coachmen in turn how close he could drive to the cliff without going over. The first said he could drive within six inches of it; the second said he could drive within two inches of it. When the third man was asked he said, "I should keep away from it as far as possible."

The man said, "You are the coachman I want."

The way that last coachman felt about the precipice is the way for boys and girls to feel about temptation. Some things that are wrong are like thin ice: they tempt you to see how far you can go, and the first thing you know

you are in. A boy, especially, is tempted to be what is known as a "daredevil;" that is, one who is not afraid of anything. But there is nothing in it, boys. That sort of thing is not courage: it is rashness, which is just another name for foolishness.

Shakespeare once said:

> "I dare do all that may become a man,
> Who dares do more is none."

The really brave boy is not the one that blusters and brags: the brave boy is usually quiet, but, as we say, "all there" when the pinch really comes.

Christ was one of the bravest men the world ever knew, and yet He told us to be afraid, actually afraid, of things that hurt our souls.

Do not see how near the fire you can go without getting scorched; don't see how near sin you can go without getting caught. It is poor business. Take this as your motto when you are inclined to tamper with wrong: "Who eats with the devil needs a long-handled spoon." The farther you keep away from him, the better.

THE FIERCEST THING IN THE BIBLE

I SUPPOSE if I should ask you which is the fiercest animal mentioned in the Bible, I should get many different answers. Some of you would say the lion; some, the bear; some the panther; some, the wolf; and so on. But none of these is right, and I will tell you why. All of these animals can be tamed, more or less; but there is one fiercer thing than all these, and it cannot be tamed, so one of the apostles says.

It is kept behind two red doors and more than twenty white bars, and its name is spelled as follows: T-O-N-G-U-E. Yes, that is it, the tongue. James says, "The tongue can no man tame."

It is not only one of the fiercest things mentioned in the Bible, but it is also one of the cruelest. I suppose you never thought that you could kill a person with your tongue, did you? And yet I have known some people say such mean things about others that those people

were killed as far as living in their town was concerned, and had to move away, for all their influence was dead.

A pretty safe way when you are tempted to say anything unkind about another boy or girl, who is not present, is to ask yourself if it is fair play, since the other cannot defend himself; for I know that you all want to play fair. That is the basis of all true sport.

And then remember also that when once you have said an unkind thing you cannot take it back, for it lives on in spite of you.

Perhaps you recollect the interesting idea which the old Hebrews had of the separate existence of words as soon as they were spoken. A curse once uttered could not be recalled because it now existed independently of the speaker. You remember the story of the blessing of Jacob by Isaac. Isaac could not give it to Esau, because it had passed beyond his control.

"Boys flying kites, haul in their white-winged birds;
You can't do that way when you're flying words,
Things that we think may sometimes fall back dead,
But God Himself can't kill them when they're said."

SACRIFICE HITS

I HOPE that all you boys play baseball, and that many of you are on baseball teams. If you are, I suppose you know what is meant by a sacrifice hit.

It is called a "sacrifice hit" when the score is close and a player comes to the bat, and, although he would like to make a run, nevertheless, for the sake of the man on the base, he makes a "bunt," so that, while the pitcher or shortstop runs up to get the ball and put him out on first base, the man on the bases may make another base.

You see, then, that instead of making what is called a "grand-stand play" he just gives up his own glory for the sake of his team.

Did you ever think that your parents are constantly making "sacrifice hits" for you? Whenever your mother goes without a new dress in order that you may have a better suit of clothes; whenever your father gives up some

pleasure to keep you in school, they are making a sacrifice hit for you.

And after all, boys and girls, that is about the only way the world has ever moved very far ahead. Socrates, an old Greek, made a sacrifice hit when he was put to death in prison with poison, because he wanted to make the young men of Athens wiser. Martin Luther made a sacrifice hit when he went to Worms, although he feared the Pope would kill him. But he was determined to get liberty for the people.

But the biggest sacrifice hit that was ever made was made by Christ when He was crucified on Calvary, in order that the world might know that God was a Father and loved His children.

And every boy and girl who would follow in the footsteps of Christ, and would be strong and noble, must be prepared to make sacrifice hits,—to forget themselves and do things for the sake of others. Jesus said, "I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." And a minister is one who serves, one who makes sacrifice hits.

THE LIBERTY OF OBEDIENCE

I KNOW it would seem strange if I told you that every boy and girl has to be tied to something in order that he may be free. And yet that is the exact truth.

The majority of you no doubt know what the multiplication-table is, and I am sure you have thought it a pretty disagreeable thing. Perhaps you have wondered why seven times eight is always fifty-six, and why your teacher insists that it shall be that every time. You don't see why it can't be fifty-five just once, or possibly fifty-seven. But, no, sir; it is *always* fifty-six.

When you get farther along in life I believe you will be glad to know that seven times eight is *always* fifty-six, whether you meet it in the grocery-store, or in the bank, or in New York, or in Philadelphia, or in China; for it will be a comfort to know that the multiplication-table does not change, like many other things, as you go from place to place. When-

ever or wherever you meet it, it is always the same. Now, because you were tied to that table as a boy or girl, you will be free to go where you like with it in after-life.

The same is true about riding a bicycle. You know that in order to be free to ride a bicycle you must obey the rules of riding it; that is, when you are in danger of falling to the right you must turn the front wheel to the right. If you do not, you will fall off.

Here again, you see, you must be tied in order to be free.

You will find that a rule all through life. That is why your parents and teachers lay down so many rules for you. It is not because they want to hedge you in and torment you, but that you may be free men and women later.

Boys and girls who are never tied up, sooner or later find that as men and women they are not free. Marie Antoinette, Queen of France, would not be tied up to any rules as a girl. She was wilful and wild, so in later life she caused the death of her husband and herself.

That same rule is even true of stars. Comets are tramp stars. They refuse to be tied up, and they ramble about all over the sky. So they never have trees and flowers on them. Our earth, on the other hand, is tied up to the sun and goes round it like a horse round a race-track, and so it is bound by seasons and brings forth beautiful trees and flowers.

Among other disadvantages of being a comet is that comets are in danger of losing a great part of their substance every time they approach the sun. Halley's comet, which used to be such a wonderful sight, has dwindled away to a very great extent. When it came a few years ago scarcely any one saw it.

So it is always: to be really free and to grow you must be tied; and I hope that none of you children will ever be fretful when your parents and teachers make rules that you do not see the meaning of, but which are for your good.

CUTTING CORNERS

HAVE you boys and girls ever noticed how all the curbings at the corners of the streets in the city are worn smooth by drivers of carts and wagons trying to cut the corners as closely as possible?

But the principal thing to notice about those curbs is that you will often find on them the paint, sometimes red and sometimes black or yellow, scratched off the wheels of these carriages that are so anxious to cut corners. And the wheels that cut corners soon get to looking shabby from lack of paint.

That is the way it nearly always happens with people who try to cut corners. I know boys and girls who try it in school.

They try to skim through by doing just as little work as possible. They cut the corners as closely as possible with their lessons, so that they can have time for play. They do that with the work in subtraction, and then, when

they get into multiplication or division, they have all sorts of trouble. And soon their arithmetic looks very shabby indeed.

Other boys and girls try to cut corners with the truth. They see just how near a lie they can come, and yet keep within the bounds of truth. Something inside tells them it is not quite fair. And again, when that happens, they have rubbed some of the bright, beautiful paint, so to speak, off their consciences. And before long their consciences get to be quite shabby, and not at all new, and people begin to say that they don't quite trust that boy or girl.

And so I say to you, boys and girls, it does not pay to cut corners. Give yourselves plenty of room. Be open and fair and industrious. For one who cuts close corners as a boy or girl, usually grows up into a very small sort of man or woman.

HABITS

I WONDER if I can make plain to you what a habit is. Have you ever seen men laying concrete sidewalks here in the city, and they put boards across to keep people from walking on the pavements before they were thoroughly dry? I am sure you have. These men keep people off the walk while it is soft because, if any one steps on it, then his footprints harden into the walk as it dries, and will always remain there.

Now, boys' and girls' minds are just like those cement walks when they are wet and soft; and if you do a thing over and over again as a boy or girl, you will make such a deep mark in your brains that when you grow up you cannot get the mark out, and you just keep on doing it, whether you want to or not.

When once you do a thing, it is easier to do it again. Even cloth and paper find it easier to do a thing a second time than the first. The

sleeves of your dresses and coats fall into the same wrinkles and creases every time you put them on. That is what we call the "hang" of a dress or coat. And if you fold a piece of paper once, it quickly gets the habit of folding along the same crease again.

And so you see that it is very important for you to get good habits as boys and girls, for first you make the habits, and then the habits make you.

You have often seen a little brook running along between its banks and over its pebbly bed. Well, once there was no brook-bed there, but gradually, years ago, a little stream began to trickle through, and finally it wore out a bed for itself. Now it cannot leave the bed if it wishes to. That is just what you do when you make a habit: you make a course which you will follow later in life.

First you take the train, then the train takes you. First the stream makes the bed, then the bed guides the stream.

They tell us that after we are thirty years of age we are little more than a bundle of

habits. I suppose thirty years seems a long way off for you boys and girls, but you will reach it if you live. And there will be men living somewhere who will hear the name that you boys now have, and you are deciding now by the habits you make what sort of man he is going to be. If you want him to be a good, honorable, strong man, be sure you form good habits now.

A LESSON IN COURTESY

I READ a story recently of how a young man got his start in life through being courteous. This young man was an assistant doorkeeper in the capitol at Washington. His work was to direct people where they wanted to go in that great building.

One day he overheard a stranger ask one of the other doorkeepers for help in finding one of the senators from California. The doorkeeper answered in a very discourteous way that it was none of his business where the senators were.

"But can't you help me?" the stranger said. "I was sent over here because he was seen to come this way."

"No, I can't," the doorkeeper answered. "I have trouble enough looking after the representatives."

The stranger was about to turn away when an assistant, who had overheard the conversation, said: "If you are from California, you

have come a long way. I will try to help you." Then he asked him to take a seat, and hurried off in search of the senator.

He soon brought him to the stranger, who then gave his card to the doorkeeper and asked him to call at his hotel that evening.

That stranger was Collis P. Huntington, who was a great railroad official in those days.

When the doorkeeper called upon him that night, Mr. Huntington offered him a position at nearly twice the salary he was then receiving. He accepted the new position and was rapidly promoted from that time on.

The lesson I would have you learn from this is that you never know when a good deed is going to return to you. I don't mean that you should be courteous, expecting that you are going to be paid for it each time, for the greatest pay for kindness is just the feeling that you have helped someone. As the old saying goes, "Civility costs nothing," and on the other hand, you never gain anything by getting the ill-will of anybody or anything, even of a dog. Be courteous: it is the mark of a gentleman, of a lady, and it is often the passport to success.

LITTLE FOXES

In far-off Syria, a country lying northeast of Palestine, the land in which Jesus was born, the farmers who keep vineyards are very much troubled with foxes and bears, which destroy their crops at night. And so, to protect their vineyards, they build high stone-walls about them, and put broken bottles on the top to keep these animals out, much as some people in this country who have orchards do, in order to keep out small boys.

These fences keep out the bears, because they cut themselves on the glass in trying to climb over, and they also keep out some of the foxes. But after all, when the grapes are nearly ripe, the owners of the vineyards and their men are obliged to build platforms up above the trellises, and stay there all night, in order to guard their crops. These watchers manage very well with all the other wild animals excepting the little foxes. They can see

the big foxes and drive them off, but the little ones they cannot see, and so these destroy the vines. I suppose that it was an experience something like that which led one of the Bible-writers to say that the little foxes destroy the vines.

It seems to me that this is very true with sins, too; it is the little sins that destroy us. When a big sin like stealing, lying or cheating comes along we can see that easily enough, and we will not let it over the fence into our lives. We drive it away, and are soon rid of it. But when the little sins come, like little foxes, we do not see them, and so they get in and destroy our character.

What are some of these little foxes? I think one is pride, which makes you so conceited, because you live in a big house or have an automobile or fine clothes, that you will not speak to or play with other boys and girls who have not quite such fine things, although they may be just as bright and just as good as you. Pride is a little fox that kills the vine of brotherliness which Christ planted in our hearts.

Then another little fox is sulkiness. Sulkiness makes you frown and go away in a corner. It sucks up all the sunlight there is, and makes the world very gray and dull, like a day in November. This fox kills the vine called "peace" which Christ planted.

One more little fox is jealousy. This makes boys and girls dislike others who get higher marks than they in school, or who have more friends, or better toys. It is one of the most destructive little foxes there is, for it kills the best vine of all that Christ planted: that is, love.

Be careful, then, boys and girls, of these little foxes, for they are worse than bears and big foxes, because they look so small and harmless, and slip by when you are not paying attention, but which destroy your character as readily as the others.

A TRICKY OX

I WANT to tell you to-day about a tricky ox I once read about. I suppose you will at once think that this ox was in a circus. But he wasn't. Far from it! It would have been better for some other cattle if he had been.

This ox is kept in the stockyards at Chicago. In those stockyards they kill thousands of cattle every year to give us beef to eat. When the cattle come to these stockyards they are not tame cattle like the cows we see out in our pastures, but they are cattle that have pastured out on the great broad prairies, and they have seen very few people. And for that reason they are very timid and hard to get close to. So it is difficult to get them near the pens where they want them.

Here is where the tricky ox comes in. In one of those yards they keep a black, short-tailed ox known as "Bob," and he just walks along in an unconcerned way toward the pens,

and he looks so calm and unafraid that the other cattle just take confidence and follow along after him. And then, before they know it, they are in a trap and can never get out. But in the meanwhile Bob has slipped away, to play the same trick on other cattle.

There are some boys and girls just like that ox. They are always urging other boys and girls on to do wrong things, telling them that they are cowards if they don't take the "dare" and do it, and showing how brave they are. But when they have got you into a scrape, and the real business of punishment begins, they can't be found anywhere: they have slipped out like old Bob.

You must be on the lookout for boys like that. Don't be afraid to be called a coward by them. Don't let them "dare" you to do things which your conscience tells you are foolish or wrong. You will be a bigger coward if you do these things because you are ashamed not to take the dare.

SHINE INSIDE"

As I WAS passing along the street the other day I saw on the window of a bootblack's parlour the words, "Shine Inside."

I want to turn these words around and make a motto of them for you boys and girls. For I think that if every boy and girl would shine inside, our homes, and the world in general, would be a much happier place.

Of course there are some boys and girls who shine only on the *outside*. A little while ago I read a story about Byron, a great poet, of whom you will learn later in school. A man said to Sir Walter Scott that he wished he might have seen Byron when he was alive. He said he had only seen a photograph of him. Scott said, "Yes, the luster is there [in the photograph], but it is not lighted up." Now, there are some boys' and girls' faces that have a luster, but it is not lighted up.

Or their faces are like a mirror that shines

brightly only when there is sunlight or some other light falling upon it. The mirror only shines outside. The luster is not always lighted up. I know boys and girls who shine outside only when other boys and girls play the game which they want them to play, or when they get the clothes they want to wear or the food they want to eat, or when they are out in pleasant company. But when they don't have their own way, then their faces are very cloudy.

But the boy or girl who shines *inside* is one who "irons out his wrinkles with a smile" even though things do not exactly please him, and he thinks of other people instead of himself.

Now, how can boys and girls shine inside so that they will always shine outside whether they have their own way or not? Well, you remember that the Bible says that when Moses came down from the mountain his face shone, because he had been talking with God. That is the secret, boys and girls. When a man or a woman or a boy or a girl talks often enough with God in prayer and asks to be made like Christ, then a light is lighted within him which

causes his face to shine. You remember Christ said, "I am the Light." Let Him into your heart, and you will shine inside.

"The man worth while is the man with a smile
When everything goes dead wrong."

THE STORM-KING EAGLE

If you have been up the Hudson River from New York to Albany by the day-boat, you will probably have noticed a high mountain on the right-hand side of the river by the name of Storm King.

I want to tell you about an eagle that used to live there. He could be seen there almost any day soaring high above the mountain-peak. And many a hunter had tried to shoot him. But he avoided them all. And how do you think he did it? Did he hide from them? No. Just by flying so high that the bullets could not reach him, or, if some chance bullet did reach him, he was so far away that it just kissed his plumage and fell back to earth without doing him any harm.

I wish that every boy and girl were as wise as that old eagle. That is always the way to avoid being wounded by sins: just keep high up above them. I mean by that, when you are

tempted to do anything that is wrong, not to stop and argue with yourself whether you will get caught if you do it, or whether you will be happier if you do not do it, or any of these things by which you lose time. But just get right away from it: put it out of your mind.

I suppose you will wonder how you can do that. I will tell you. You have often heard about "wishing-caps," and how the people in fairy-stories put them on and just wish themselves wherever they want to be, and quick as a flash they are there. Well, there is a wishing-cap that every boy and girl can put on when he is tempted; it is this prayer, "O God, help me not to do this thing which is wrong!" And if you say that prayer, and believe God will help you, it will take you high out of reach of the sin, just as that old eagle flew high above reach of the bullets. For God says that they who ask Him for help shall "mount up on wings as eagles."

A DOG WHICH ATE THE BIBLE

I HEARD an amusing story sometime ago about a savage in Africa who came to a missionary very much excited and told him that his dog had been completely spoiled as a watch-dog because he had chewed up and eaten a small New Testament he had happened to get hold of. He said that the dog would never be of any more use because the New Testament which he had swallowed would take all the fight out of him, and he could no longer keep wild animals away from the sheep.

That seems a strange notion for a grown-up man to get into his head, doesn't it? And yet, boys and girls, I run across some young people even here in America that think if they let Christ into their hearts it will make them sort of "wishy-washy" and "goody-goody," and not strong and rugged people.

It is true that to be a Christian does take some of the fight out of a person, but it is the

quarrelsome kind of fighting that has neither beauty nor strength in it which it takes out of one. But when you come to read history you will find that some of our bravest soldiers were Christians. John Havelock, a British general who fought in India for the sake of his country, was called "The Christian Warrior." Sir Oliver Cromwell, who had to lead an army in England against the king, who was ill-treating the people, had a body of soldiers under him who were Christians, and they were such good soldiers and so hard to defeat that they were called "Cromwell's Ironsides." Sometimes just before battle these soldiers used to sing hymns and then pray on the battlefields. And because they were Christians it made better and braver soldiers of them.

And so the truest kind of courage that any boy or girl can have is the kind that Christ gives. Paul tells all of us Christians to be "good soldiers." The Bible takes the wrong kind of fight out of you and puts the right kind of fight into you, the fight for noble things.

STEAM AND SAILS

ALL the vessels on the oceans can be divided into two classes: steamships and sailing vessels. The sailing vessels, as you know, set their broad white sails like wings to catch the favouring winds, and then they go scudding across the seas like birds to their distant harbours. But when there is no wind these vessels must sometimes lie becalmed, and do not move for days or sometimes weeks. The steamships, on the other hand, do not depend upon the wind to drive them ahead. Their power comes from great engines away down in the heart of the vessel. Even if the wind blows right in the face of the ship, it only makes the boiler-fires burn faster and brighter, and she plunges ahead in spite of wind or tide.

Boys and girls also can be divided into two classes, like ships. Some depend upon other boys and girls to make them go; others have the "go" in themselves. These people with the

"go" in themselves we call "go-ahead" sort of people. They are the boys and girls who become leaders. The others are followers.

What the world most needs is these "go-ahead" people. There are plenty of people who go like a sailing vessel when there is something from the outside to send them along. I heard a man say the other day that another man was like "a chip in a pan of milk;" that is, he went only where he was pushed.

If you want to have "go" in yourselves, try to think things out for yourselves. Don't do things just because somebody else does them. Don't wear things just because somebody else wears them. Don't say things just because somebody else says them. Paul says that people who are blown about by every wind do not amount to much. I am sure of this, at least, that I should rather be a steamship than a sailing vessel, that only goes when a wind blows.

A FISH-STORY

A RECENT writer tells in one of his books of an experience he had as a boy when he went on a fishing-trip with his father.

They were wading along in brooks with their rubber-boots on. But sometimes the water was too deep for him, and he was in danger of getting his feet wet by the water running in over the tops of his boots. When, however, they came to places like these, his father would take him pig-a-back and carry him along, and then the boy would fish with his rod resting on his father's shoulder, and his line dangling in front. And this writer says that he used to catch many fish in this way. Then he adds, "How many of our best catches in life are made over someone's else shoulder?"

I think that fathers and mothers are always allowing their children to fish over their shoulders, don't you? When they send you to school to get an education, so that in later life you

may enjoy good books, you are catching fish over their shoulders. When they give you money to travel, so that you may know what a big, beautiful place the world is, you are fishing over their shoulders. When they give you beautiful homes, so that you shall have good friends and grow up thoughtful, well-mannered men and women, you are fishing over their shoulders.

In fact, it seems to me that we should not catch many fish at all if it were not for our loving, painstaking, unselfish parents.

And don't you think we ought to be obedient and thoughtful of them when they carry us along so uncomplainingly and rejoice in seeing us take in such beautiful catches from life?

OPPORTUNITY

HAVE you ever heard of a picture that was called "Opportunity?" It represents a person with a great deal of hair on her forehead, but none on the back of her head. The meaning of the picture is this: When you catch an opportunity as it *comes*, it is easy to hold; but once you let it get by you, it is very difficult to catch it again. It is something like trying to catch a train that has just pulled out of the station.

I used to live near a boy in Canada who did not like to go to school, and when the snow was deep and the weather was frosty he would find some excuse by which he got his mother to let him stay at home. When he grew up he found out what he had missed by not getting an education, and he tried to make it up, but he could not. He was running after the train. He soon got discouraged and gave up, and tried to get his living in some other way than by hard work. The last I heard of him he had just been arrested for stealing.

I have known other boys and girls who thought of joining the Church, but they just kept putting it off and putting it off, thinking that any time would do well enough. And then, as they got older, they felt that they weren't good enough, or that some of their friends might not approve, and so they have grown up and have not yet joined, and each year it keeps growing harder.

The two opportunities that you boys and girls ought to take "by the forelock," as we say, are, first: in getting all the schooling you can while you have the chance. You will never have such a good opportunity again, and if you let it slip you may never, never catch up. And second: in making as fine a start as you can in your Christian life by learning all you can about the Bible and by getting Christ's example into your hearts.

GOD IS NOW HERE

In a sermon which Dean Stanley, an English minister, preached to children in Westminster Abbey, he told the following story: "There was a little girl living with her grandfather. She was a good child, but he was not a very good man; and one day, when she came back from school, he had put in writing over her bed, 'God is nowhere,' for he did not believe in the good God, and he tried to make the little girl believe the same as he.

"What did the little girl do? She had no eyes to see, no ears to hear what her grandfather tried to teach her. She was very small. She could only read words of one syllable at a time; she rose above the bad meaning which he had tried to put into her mind, because her little mind could not do otherwise, and she read the words not 'God is nowhere,' but 'God is now here.' "

And she was right. She was wiser than her

gray-haired grandfather. For God is now here. He is everywhere. And whenever even the smallest child speaks to Him in the simplest prayer He hears the child's voice. God is now here. That is a good motto for us to take with us to school, to keep us honest; to play, to keep us sweet; to our homes, to keep us unselfish.

DAVID LIVINGSTONE'S FAITH

No doubt you have all heard of David Livingstone, the great missionary to Africa. I wish to tell you a story of his faith in Christ.

He was trying to cross one of the rivers of Africa one day with his little company of men, when the savages in that locality tried to prevent him. They gathered in large numbers with their spears and poisoned arrows and war-clubs, and blocked his way to the river. Livingstone and his little company were no match for these hostile warriors, and it looked as if he and his men would be killed.

Then he thought of a scheme of waiting till nightfall and of crossing over under cover of the darkness. But later that seemed to him a cowardly thing to do, and he tells us how the verse in the Bible came back to him in which Jesus says: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations . . . and lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

The great missionary said of this verse: "It is the word of a Gentleman of the most sacred and strictest honour, and there is an end on't. I feel quite calm now, thank God."

Next morning he crossed the river without any difficulty, although the bank was lined with savages armed to the teeth.

I think that is always the way when we trust in Christ. He has promised never to leave us nor forsake us, and we can rely upon His word.

THE HAPPY MAN

ONCE upon a time there was a king who was very rich, but very unhappy. He had a beautiful marble palace, with extensive parks and grounds, fine horses and carriages, but he was not happy.

So one day he called together his court-messengers, and sent them out into the world, telling them to travel far and wide until they found a man who was happy beyond all others, and when they found him, to take off his shirt and bring it to him. For he thought that perhaps by wearing this shirt he might gain the happiness he sought.

The messengers went forth, and after a long search finally found a man who seemed happier than all his fellows. And as he sat singing in the sunshine the king's messengers pounced upon him to take away his shirt; but lo, when they took his coat off they found he had no shirt!

The story means this, that happiness does not depend upon what you have or have not. It comes from within, and not from without. If you have the right spirit you will have a song, riches or not. But if you have not the right spirit you will not be happy, no matter what you have.

A SERMON FOR THE BOYS

A TEACHER said the other day that ninety boys out of every hundred who fail in grammar schools and high-schools smoke tobacco. He says also that boys who smoke are nearly all unruly and disobedient in school. And he says again, that boys who get their lessons well and stand high in grammar-schools take lower marks in high-school if they begin to smoke in high-school. This ought to be enough to make any boy stop and think before he begins to smoke, for it shows that it not only hurts a boy's mind, but his morals also.

I think the reason most boys take up smoking is not because they like it, but because their schoolmates do it, and they want to be one of "the crowd." When you boil that down it means either that a boy wants to be smart, or else he has not courage enough to stand alone; that is, he is a coward.

You would not think much of a boy who

was about to enter a race and, just before he entered it, hurt his foot on purpose, so that he could not run his best, would you? Well, that is just what every boy does who smokes: it hinders him in the race of life. You ought not to smoke before you are twenty-one years old, because your body is not strong enough to stand it. The safest way is not to smoke at all, but at least don't smoke until you get your growth.

TIRE-TROUBLE

PEOPLE who own automobiles have a great deal to say about "tire-trouble." There are a great many kinds of tire-trouble. In the first place, a tire often gets punctured by a nail running into it. Then there are "blow-outs" caused by the inner tube giving way. Then there are leaky valves, by which the air slowly leaks out. There are also sand-blisters, caused by little particles of sand getting into the tire and making a swelling in it, which soon gives way. And finally tires may get rim-cut, which means that the steel rim which fastens them on wears them through by rubbing. The result of these things is what is known as a flat tire with all the air gone out, and the automobile bumps on the hard rim.

Boys and girls have tire-troubles, too. I have seen boys and girls get so vexed about things that they just exploded in a burst of temper like a blow-out in a tire. I have known

them to run up against something sharp and difficult which took all the buoyancy out of them, just like a nail causing a puncture in a tire. I have known them to tell a lie, although nobody else knew it, and it bothered them so inside that it was like sand on the inside of the tire causing a sand-blister. I have known them to fret about things so that all their enthusiasm leaked away just as the tire that had a leaky valve. And finally I have known them to be rim-cut by associating with some sharp-tongued boy or girl. The result of all this was a flat tire, and these boys and girls just went bumping along without any happiness or lightness of heart. They couldn't get anywhere with their work or their play.

The only cure that I know of for a boy or girl with a flat tire is more of God's uplifting strength.

God says that they who trust in Him shall run, and not be weary.

WATCHING FOR IDLE BOYS

PROBABLY all boys and girls whisper in school if they think the teacher will not catch them. Some teachers set boys and girls to watch one another and to tell on one another when they see anyone whispering. I do not think that is a fair thing to do, for it makes tell-tales of boys and girls. And tell-tales are never attractive.

The story I am going to relate to you is about a teacher who set the pupils in a room to watch each other, and to tell if they caught anyone idle. One boy had a grudge against another, and he thought that now would be the time to get even with him. So he watched carefully, and as soon as he found the other boy idling he called the teacher's attention to it. Of course every boy and girl waited anxiously to see what the teacher would do. And then something unexpected happened. The teacher said to the tell-tale: "So you saw this boy idling, did you?"

"Yes, sir," quickly answered the boy.

"Then," said the teacher, "what were you doing when you found him idling?" The boy blushed, and hung his head. He not only had been caught idling himself, but playing a mean trick. That was a lesson for him: he never watched for idle boys again. And it ought to be a lesson for us, too, when instead of attending to our own work, we neglect it, and try to get other people into trouble.

CHRIST AND THE DOG

My children's sermon to-day has to do with a legend. A legend is a story that has come down to us from the olden times, but which cannot be proved to be true. This legend is about Christ.

It tells of how one day He was walking down a street in Jerusalem and saw a company of people gathered about a dead dog in the street. Now, city dogs in the land where Christ lived are not petted as they are in our own country. They act as scavengers, and live on whatever they can pick up. They are shaggy and dirty and yellow. The people stone them and kick them, and do not call them by kind names.

So the people who had gathered about this dog were making unkind remarks about it, saying how ugly it was, when Christ came up, and looking at the dog, He said, "But do you see what beautiful, even, white teeth he has?"

Then, it is said, the people knew this must be Christ, who could find something to praise even in a dog like that.

But that was the way Christ always dealt with people. He always saw something good in them. And when people knew that Christ saw something good in them, they tried to live up to what He saw, and to be good.

You remember how Zaccheus, the little, short man who had been robbing the people by collecting too much tax-money, climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Christ pass by. Christ told him that He was going to take dinner with him. And when Christ dined with him, Zaccheus felt that Christ thought he was better than he was, and he became so ashamed of what he had been doing that he went and gave the money back.

And Christ's rule is a good rule for us to follow. If we wish people to be good, we must look for the good things in them. If we *expect* them to be good, they will *try* to be good. There is a jailer in Chicago who, when a man has served his term in jail, gives him a letter of

recommendation so that he can get a job. And the men who get these letters are ashamed to do wrong and to get into jail again, because of the disappointment they will cause the jailer who believes in them.

A girl once said to her mother, who was always finding something good instead of bad to say of people, "Mother, I believe you would have something good to say of the devil."

"Well," said her mother, "we might all admire his perseverance."

Try to see how many good things you can see in people. It's the best game of all to play.

THE BOY WHO WAS TO BE MANAGER

A BOY recently answered an advertisement of a certain firm in New York which wanted an office-boy. He went to the office, and as he was a bright, neat-looking boy, he made a good impression upon the manager. The manager liked him and told him to report for work the following morning.

The boy was about to leave the office in great glee, when the manager called him back and asked him to write his name, in order that he might see whether or no he was a good writer. The boy wrote his name in such a miserable scrawl that the manager could hardly read it, and he told the boy that he was very sorry, but he would be obliged to cancel his agreement, and could not take him on.

He then advised the boy to take lessons in penmanship, in order to improve his writing.

"But," the boy said, "why do I need to be a good penman? I'm going to be a man-

ager some day, and I'll have a stenographer to do my writing for me."

"Yes," said the man, "that may be true. But before you get to be a manager anywhere you will have to work up to it through a great many years of lower positions, and you must learn to write." The boy could not see why, and went to find work elsewhere, before improving his writing.

There are a great many people just like that boy. They expect to be managers, superintendents, presidents, but they don't see that they must work up to it, and every step must be faithfully and patiently taken.

Some boys expect to be good at long division, and they do not take any pains to learn subtraction thoroughly. Or they expect to be good in English, and will not study grammar. They are like the boy in this story.

Some girls expect to appear like ladies, but they pay no attention to what their mothers say about neatness,—such as keeping their hair in order and their shoes clean. These girls are also like the boy of the story.

Most things worth while in life have to be worked for, and as you cannot well get upstairs at one jump, but must take the steps between one by one, so the good things of life come by patiently filling in each task with care and faithfulness. Then the big things will take care of themselves.

A TALE ABOUT WORDS

Boys and girls like fairy-tales. So my sermon to-day is to be in that form. This fairy-tale comes from France, and it is told by Katherine Pyle in her book, "Fairy-Tales from Many Lands."

A widow had two daughters. One was coarse and slovenly, with an ugly disposition, but because she resembled her mother the woman loved her and thought her beautiful. The other daughter had hair like gold and a complexion like a pink rose, while her eyes were as blue as the sky. She was sweet-tempered and kind, but her mother hated her, and gave her all the hardest work to do and the poorest food to eat.

One day she gave her a heavy jug and sent her into the forest to bring water for her sister. When the girl reached the spring she was tired and sad, and sat weeping on the stone. Presently a voice behind her asked for a drink, and

she turned and saw a withered old woman sitting there. So she gently raised the jug to the woman's lips, and then refilled it and started home.

But the old woman called her back and said: "Daughter, you have helped one who is able to repay you for your kindness. Every word you speak shall be a pearl or a rose." The girl hastened home. Her mother met her with scolding words, asking her why she had been so long. And when her daughter explained to her, lo! every word she spoke was a pearl or a rose. The greedy old woman snatched up the pearls and left the roses.

Then she called her other daughter,—the ugly one,—told her what had happened, and said: "Hasten, daughter! Take the silver pitcher and run to the fountain. If the fairy has given these for a drink from a jug, what will she give for a drink from a silver pitcher!"

The girl sulked off to the fountain swinging the pitcher and loitering along the way. When she reached there no old woman was in sight, but beside the spring was a tall, beautiful young

woman who asked her for a drink. The ugly one replied, "There is the pitcher, draw the water for yourself."

When she was about to go, the young woman said sharply: "Stop! the words that fall from your lips are evil things, and they shall look like the things they are. Every word you speak shall be a spider or a snake, until you learn to speak kindly."

The girl trudged off home scarcely thinking about what the woman said, little knowing that it was the same fairy who had spoken to her sister. But when she began to answer her mother, spiders and snakes dropped from her lips, and she was very much frightened.

I wonder whether our words would be pearls or spiders if we could see them? Let us make them pearls.

SUFFOCATED TREES

We sometimes hear of people being suffocated by gas, but it is not often we hear of trees being suffocated.

But the other day I was walking down the street, and noticed that all the trees on one side of the avenue for several blocks were dead. They looked as if they had been fine, strong, healthy trees, and I could not understand why they had all died, until I was told that a gas-pipe beneath their roots had leaked, and that the escaping gas had killed the trees.

I am sure you and I know people who are like those dead trees: they have become discouraged and wilted, and if you and I could dig down into their lives we should probably find something like that poisonous gas which has ruined them.

Sin is the most poisonous thing that gets into one's life.

If a boy or girl has done wrong and is

hiding it from his father and his mother, and his conscience is pricking him all the time, then he cannot be sunny and healthy like a growing tree. He becomes cross and easily provoked, and is sulky and wilted.

If you have done something wrong, which you ought to tell your parents about, do not go to sleep until you have told them. If you do, you will wake in the morning with dread, and you will go around all day with a dull ache which will spoil all the sunshine. Moreover, if you begin keeping secrets from your parents in this way you will have no one to check you in your misdeeds. Your parents may punish you, but they are the best friends you have. And besides, there is no punishment like hiding a feeling of guilt. The next best thing after keeping from doing wrong is to own up to it in an honest way when you have done wrong. Many a boy and girl would have been saved untold trouble if they had only been frank with their parents. One of the saddest days in any boy's or girl's life is when they first keep a guilty secret from their parents.

ULYSSES AND THE SIRENS

WHEN you boys and girls get older and further along in school, you will probably learn of a famous Greek whose name was Ulysses. He was noted as a heroic seaman, who travelled over dangerous seas and into unknown lands.

In one of the seas where Ulysses sailed was an island known as the Isle of the Sirens. The sirens would attract sailors to their shores by beautiful music. But when the sailors drew near the land they would irresistibly cast themselves into the sea, to their destruction.

Now Ulysses had heard of the sirens through Circe, and he wanted to hear the maidens sing, but he did not want to come within their power. So this is the way he managed it. One day he put wax in the ears of all his sailors, so that they could not hear the music, and then had himself strapped to the mast. Then he ordered the sailors to row near enough to the island for him to hear the music. In this way he heard the singing, but did not get caught.

That was a clever way of getting tempted, and yet not getting caught, was it not? But someone has said in a joke it would have been better if Ulysses had had an orchestra on board which would have made better music than the sirens. Then neither Ulysses nor the sailors would have been tempted to go too near the dangerous isle.

That is a pretty good way of dealing with all kinds of temptation,—not by trying to keep temptation out, but by putting something more attractive in its place. If you are tempted to go to the moving pictures, when you were told not to, do not simply stand around outside the place with nothing else to do. Go off and play something which will be more attractive than moving pictures. If you are told that you must not go fishing, don't sulk around wishing that you could go. Just go at baseball or something else, and soon you will have forgotten about the other thing.

Always put something else in the place of the thing you are not to do, and it will help you to overcome temptation.

POISON-LABELS

You have all seen bottles of poison, and you know when your father or mother buys poison from the druggist there is a label on the bottle marked "POISON" in large letters, and on the label is a picture of a skull and crossbones. This is done to warn people from drinking the poison.

Now, if a druggist were to put clear, pure water into a bottle, and put a label marked "Poison" on it, no one would drink the water if he were choking, for fear of being poisoned.

And there are boys and girls just like that good, pure, fresh water with the poison-label on it. They are good at heart. They are kind and unselfish and obedient, but nobody will have anything to do with them because they put such terrible poison-labels upon themselves.

I will tell you what some of these poison-labels are which frighten people away from boys and girls. One of them is slang. Now,

of course, some girls and boys who are inwardly little ladies and gentlemen use slang, but usually slang is used by low-bred people who have not words enough to say what they want to. And consequently when you use slang, if people do not know that you are well-bred boys and girls, they think that you are coarse and vulgar, and they will have nothing to do with you.

Another poison-label that boys sometimes stick on is swearing. And of course that is always bad-mannered. Another is smoking. Another is bad company. I knew a boy who was really good at heart, but who persisted in going with bad boys, and no business man in town would take him into his business because of that terrible label.

Girls sometimes wear such poison-labels as forwardness; that is, they are always making themselves heard and seen. Others are proud. Others chew gum.

I have not time to mention all of these different labels. You can think of them for yourselves. What I want to say is that it is too

bad for such good, useful, well-intentioned and wholesome boys and girls to put on labels which lead people to think less of them than they should think. For by these things they spoil their chances of getting into the company of well-bred people.

LIES THAT WALK

We usually think of a lie as a thing that is spoken. But there are other kinds of lies. Some girls that I once knew went to an office in New York and bought some labels with the pictures and names of hotels in Europe printed on them. They pasted these on their suit-cases.

Now, as you probably know, when people go to Europe some of the hotels paste labels on your suit-cases and trunks when they take your baggage to the station. Some people come home with their baggage quite covered over with these slips of paper, and one can easily see by these labels what a long distance the owners of the luggage have traveled.

These girls who bought those labels in New York, but had never been to Europe, were trying to make people believe that they, too, had traveled in foreign countries.

Of course you know what that sort of deception means: it is telling a lie without speaking it.

So you see these lies went with the suit-cases. And wherever those girls carried their bags, the lies walked along with them, and said to everyone who looked at them, "Our owners have been to Europe."

Of course, no self-respecting boy or girl would do such a thing. But you must also be careful not to act falsehoods by pretending things in school, or acting at home as if you don't know about things when you do. Don't try to fool *yourselves*, then you will not try to fool other people.

WELLINGTON AND THE SOLDIER

No boy likes to be called a coward, and some boys do things that are dangerous for fear that their friends will think they have no courage. Sometimes it is more cowardly to do a dangerous thing like that than not to do it.

Do not think that you are a coward because you are afraid of dangerous things. Some of the bravest men the world ever saw have been afraid, but in spite of their fear they went firmly on.

A story is told of Lord Wellington, a great English general, who saw a young man in his army who was white with fear just before a battle, and yet did not run away. Lord Wellington said: "There is a brave man. He knows the danger, and yet he faces it." Another story is told of a soldier who was making fun of a second who was badly frightened just before battle. The frightened soldier said to the other one: "Yes, I am afraid. And if you were

half as much afraid as I am, you would run away."

The lesson I want to draw is this, that it is not cowardly to be afraid of things which have danger in them. It is cowardly to run away if you ought to face them. And if you ought not to face them it is cowardly to go headlong into them, just because of some other boy's foolish dare.

I remember a playmate who used to bite the heads off the fish he caught, just because another boy dared him to. It used to make him terribly sick, but he was too much of a coward not to do it. Some boys take up smoking and drinking and swearing for the same reason. Any boy who does that sort of thing is a coward.

ABRAHAM'S GUEST

YOU have all heard of Abraham, who went out from his home in Ur of the Chaldees to find God. And you remember how he dwelt in tents, and had hundreds of cattle. And you know how good he was to his nephew, Lot.

There is a story told about Abraham which you will not find in the Bible. Abraham received into his tent one day an aged traveler. After he had invited the traveler to dine with him at his sunset meal, Abraham went out to offer up his evening sacrifice to God. But the traveler would not join him in prayer and thanksgiving. Abraham was angry because of the old man's lack of religion, and drove him from his tent.

Later in the evening the angel of the Lord appeared to Abraham and asked him why he had driven out the old man. Abraham replied:

"Lord, he refused to acknowledge Thee!"

The Lord replied: "What! I have borne with this old man for eighty years, and you could not bear with him for two days!" After that, so the story goes, Abraham helped everyone who came along, no matter what his religious belief might be.

That is a good story for boys and girls to remember when they feel that they cannot forgive someone who has done them a wrong. What would become of you if God never forgave you when *you* did wrong? It is this spirit of forgiveness that Christ means to teach us when He says in the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." If, then, you say that prayer and refuse to forgive anyone who has done you a wrong, you mean that you want to have God act just as unforgiving with you as you are with your enemies. That would be terrible,—to ask God not to forgive you. None of us would dare pray like that.

You remember Peter came to Christ once and asked how often we were to forgive people. Peter thought seven times was enough. But

Christ said, " No, you must forgive until seventy times seven." That would be four hundred and ninety times. Christ did not mean exactly that many times. But He meant more times than you can think. That is, if you are a follower of Christ you are to forgive a person as often as he is sorry for having done you a wrong, and comes to you and asks your forgiveness.

ABOUT GENEROSITY

WHEN we speak of a person as being generous we usually think of someone who gives his money, or whatever belongs to him, freely to others. But did you ever think that people can be generous with their thoughts, too?

Let me show you what I mean by that. There were once two boys who went to visit at a farm where they kept Shetland ponies, and of course both boys wanted to ride them. So one day they persuaded the man in charge of the ponies to put the saddle on a handsome black one and lead him out into the yard for them to mount. But when it came to actually getting on the pony's back, the younger boy was afraid. Although the older boy urged him, he would not take a ride. Finally the other boy mounted and rode gaily off, and came back beaming with delight. But instead of being proud, and thinking the other boy cowardly, he went over to the younger lad and

said: "Now you get on. I know you can ride him." And when at last the other did ride off, the older boy's eyes danced with delight, and he clapped his hands to encourage the younger boy. That is one of the best forms of generosity.

Another illustration of it is when you are on a baseball or football team, or in a contest of any sort, to be able to say when you are honestly beaten that you were beaten by a better team. When you can say that, it takes half the sting out of defeat and makes those who win admire you more than ever.

Don't be stingy with your thoughts about people. Always think the best about others, and believe the best, and you will grow to be open-hearted, friendly, lovable and big.

SUN AND WIND

ONCE upon a time, according to an old fable, the sun and the northwind had a contest to see which could take a man's coat off the more quickly.

The northwind tried first. It gathered together all its forces in its own corner of the earth, and then rushed forth upon this man who was walking along a country-road. The wind blew and blew, and it seemed as if the traveller's coat would be blown from his back or torn to tatters. But the harder the northwind blew the tighter the man drew his coat about him, and the wind could not get it off his back. After it had spent all its force it gave up in despair.

Then the sun had its turn. It came out without noise or violence like the northwind. It did not whistle in the treetops nor bluster through the bushes. It did not buffet nor struggle with the man. It just went on pouring forth its heat. And it seemed as if it could never

win, any more than the northwind. But soon the traveller took out his handkerchief and wiped the perspiration from his face. Then, before long, he took off his hat. Soon he unbuttoned his coat, and finally he took it off of his own accord. The sun had won the contest against the northwind!

Now, a fable is meant to teach a lesson. The lesson of this fable is that gentleness wins where only strength and rudeness fail. If some one has done you a wrong, the way to deal with him is not to try to "get even" with him, as we say. Nor is the best way to get angry with him and scold him. The Bible tells us that the way to overcome your enemy is to do good for evil, for it says by so doing you will "heap coals of fire upon his head."

Usually it is the weak people who bluster like the northwind, and storm and brag. Strong people are usually quiet. There is an old saying that "if you are right you can afford to keep your temper, and if you are wrong you cannot afford to lose it." Be gentle. You will win more that way than by getting angry.

THE BOY AND THE TURTLE

THEODORE PARKER was one of the greatest preachers America ever had, and this story is told of him as a boy. One day, as he was going across the fields, he came to a pond where he saw a small turtle sunning itself upon a stone which rose out of the water. The boy picked up a stick, and was about to strike the turtle, when a voice within him said, "Stop!" His arm paused in midair and, startled, he ran home to ask his mother what the voice meant. Tears came into his mother's eyes as she took the boy in her arms and told him that it was his conscience which had cried "Stop!" Then she told him that his conscience was the voice of God, and that his moral safety depended upon his heeding that inner voice.

The same thing is true of all boys and girls. If you obey that inner voice in questions of right and wrong, it will speak to you clearly.

But if you neglect it, it will grow silent,

and you will be left in darkness and in doubt as to what is right and wrong.

Some people call this voice the "inner light," and that is a very good name for it. Every time you walk by the light you put fresh oil in the lamp, and the light grows stronger and the way clearer.

Whenever that inner voice speaks to you and tells you that a thing is wrong, don't argue with the voice and give reasons for doing the thing that is wrong. Obey the voice at once, as Parker did, and it will save you endless trouble.

THE BOY AND THE NICKEL

A MAN once found a boy crying on the street, and asked the little chap what he was crying about. The child told him he had just lost a nickel. The stranger gave him another, and then the boy began to cry again. This greatly astonished the man, and he asked him why he was crying again. The little chap said, "Because, if I hadn't lost that other nickel, I'd have two now."

That was, of course, a very foolish way to look at it, but that is the way a great many people look at things. This is what is called covetousness. Covetous people always want something they have not, and so they are usually unhappy.

The way to be happy is to think of the things you have, and not of the things you have not. A man was once told that Cæsar was going to cause him great unhappiness, and he replied that if Cæsar could blot out the sun

with a blanket he might make him unhappy. But if he had the sun to shine upon him, he would still be happy. We all have the sun to shine upon us, and other things a-plenty to be happy over, if we will just count them up. Let us not be like the little boy crying about the nickel he did not have.

THE THREE FATES

Boys and girls in ancient Greece believed that there were three fates, in the form of three women seated above the clouds, who spun the thread of everyone's life, and cut it off with shears when death came.

We no longer believe in such things, but we still speak of fate. Boys and girls sometimes say that they are fated to fail in examinations, and so think they cannot help failing. But that is no more true than the belief about the three women which the Grecian boys and girls held. As a matter of fact, nothing outside of us makes evil things happen to us. We make our own fates. Or shall I say, we *are* our own fates? Someone has said, "Our fates lie asleep along the roadside until we waken them." That is very true, as I think I can show you by a story.

Not long ago I was riding on a train up through Vermont. A boy came into the car

selling papers, books, candy, fruit, and other things. There was a boy opposite me in the smoking-car who wanted to appear very smart and manly. He was smoking a cigar and looking very much traveled. The trainboy offered him a book which had a bad title and worse pictures in it. But in front of this young chap sat two bright-faced, innocent-looking boys who did not pretend to be anything but what they were. The trainboy offered them salted peanuts. In front of those boys sat a fine, clean-looking, well-bred man. The trainboy offered him a good, wholesome book.

Now, three fates were in that car in the form of that trainboy, and each person invited his own kind of fate by what he was in himself. That is true all through life. Be true, and you attract truth. Be evil, and you attract evil. Your fate is what you are.

THE INCH-WORM AND THE MOUNTAIN

Out in the state of California there is a great valley known as the Yosemite Valley, and here once lived a tribe of Indians who tried to explain how the wonderful streams and trees and rocks came to be.

The story of one of the highest peaks, El Capitan, is very interesting. One day some Indian boys went fishing in a beautiful lake in the Yosemite, and after they had grown tired they lay down in the sun upon a rock beside the lake. They soon fell fast asleep. How long they slept they did not know, but when they awoke they found that during their sleep the rock on which they lay had been stood on end, so that they were now nearly a mile high in the air and had no means of getting down. They were in a bad plight.

But the animals in the valley which were friendly to mountaineers saw their misfortune and held a conference as to how to help the boys

get down. They decided that the only thing to do was to try to climb up the face of the cliff. But the rock was too steep, and so they tried to jump up. First the raccoon tried it, then the bear, then the squirrel, then the fox, and finally the mountain-goat. It was all to no avail, however, and they gave up in discouragement, and were about to leave the boys to perish, when the inch-worm came along and offered her services. The animals laughed her to scorn. What could she do, with her snail-pace, when they all, who were so fleet of foot, had to give it up!

But she would not be laughed out of her purpose, and she began to climb up the cliff. Slowly, inch by inch, she crawled up, so slowly that it seemed as if she would take a thousand years to get there. But as she passed crag after crag the animals below ceased making fun of her and began to shout encouragement. At last she reached the top. And then the Great Spirit turned her into a huge butterfly so strong that she flew down, with the boys on her back, to safety.

There is a verse in the Old Testament which says that the race is not always to the swift, which means that it is not always the strongest who win. It is the one who keeps at it. Many a bright boy fails in school because the lessons come so easily he does not work. Many a dull boy wins because he sticks to it and plods away.

If you are tempted to trust too much to your brightness, remember the animals who made fun of the inch-worm. If you are dull, remember the inch-worm, take courage, and plod away. You will get there sometime.

THE FRENCH DRUMMER-BOY

I WANT to tell you to-day of one of the bravest deeds ever done by a boy.

It happened this way. Back in the year 1793, when the French people were having trouble with their king and queen, and finally put them to death, the rulers called in soldiers from other nations to help them against their own people. The foreign soldiers met the French troops before a town called Maubeuge, and there a fierce battle was fought.

The fiercest part of the fighting was carried on against Hungarian Grenadiers, who held the market-place of the town. During this charge a drummer-boy in the French army saw that his countrymen were having a hard time of it, so he slipped around back of these Hungarian soldiers to the other side of the market-place, right in the thick of the enemy, and there drummed the charge, in order to make his comrades think that some of the French soldiers

had already pushed through the enemy's ranks, and so encourage the others to push on.

Many years after, in digging up the ground about the market-place, the little bones of that drummer-boy were found buried alongside the bones of the tall Hungarian men amongst whom he had fallen. The French people have put up a statue to his memory in the town of Avesnes, and he is shown still beating the charge on his drum, and looking out toward the frontier whence the enemy of his people came.

A KING IN THE STUFF

In the early days of the history of the children of Israel the people were ruled by judges, and it was not until they saw the nations round about them under the leadership of kings that they desired a king of their own. In spite of the warnings of the old prophet Samuel, they demanded a king, and Samuel chose a young man, afterwards King Saul, to be their ruler.

But when the people came together to make Saul King they could not find him. They searched a long while, and finally God told them that Saul had hidden himself amongst the baggage. There they looked, and sure enough, as the old story says, there was a king "hid in the stuff."

That was many hundreds of years ago, and kings are no longer made in that way. But the story has a meaning still for every boy. There is still a king hid in the stuff that goes to make up every boy. A great many things about a

boy in which he hides his kingship seem no better than the worthless stuff in which Saul hid. There are mistakes, outbursts of temper, laziness, selfishness, impatience, deceit, and cruelty. But hidden beneath all that, God would have you remember that there is still a king hid in the stuff.

A story is told of the son of Louis XVI of France, whose father and mother were put to death by the people. He was thus left an orphan, and was sent to live with a wicked man and woman who tried to teach him all manner of wrongdoing. But when they tried to persuade him to do wrong, he would refuse, and say that he was a king's son, and would some day be king himself, therefore he could not stoop so low.

I wish every boy, when he is tempted to do some unmanly thing, would remember his kingship, too. You are not the son of an earthly king, but you are each the son of a Heavenly King, and you, too, have the making of a king in you. You are too great to do mean things. There is an old hymn which runs like this:

"My Father is rich in houses and lands,
He holdeth the wealth of the world in His hands;
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold
He has gone to prepare us a mansion untold.
I'm the child of a King, the child of a King,
With Jesus my Saviour, I'm the child of a King."

And when you would do a mean thing, ask yourself if that is worthy of your kingship. Remember also that only those who live Kingly lives are worthy to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

BREAD AND WINE

THIS is Communion Sunday, when the Church celebrates what is known as "the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper." You remember that on the night before Christ was crucified He gathered His twelve disciples together that He might have a quiet meal and talk with them. And it is that Last Supper, as it is known, which we call to mind when we observe Communion Sunday.

The first Christians did not have communion on Sunday. They used to have a common meal together on weekdays, and at a neighbour's house. At these meals they would recall the sayings of Jesus and His loving deeds.

But Christ not only had the Last Supper with His disciples, and taught them to remember Him in the breaking of the bread: He also gave them the lesson about the bread and the wine by which to remember Him.

You know how bread is made. Grains of wheat are put in the ground by the farmer,

and these grains give up their lives in order that other grains may grow on the stalk at harvest-time. Then these grains are gathered in, and finally ground into flour. Christ also gave up His life just as those first grains of wheat in the ground. And He meant to tell us by the bread at communion that if we are to help other people we must be willing to give up our own selfish desires for their sake.

By the wine at communion Christ meant to teach us that just as the branch of a grapevine must be attached to the stalk before there can be grapes, so you and I must keep close to Christ in order to be able to live the life of unselfishness which shows that we are His followers. He says: "I am the vine, ye are the branches. Without me ye can do nothing."

After Christ's death, whenever the disciples took their meal together, they would think of Christ, and they would forgive one another and become more gentle and loving. Whenever we see the communion-table prepared, we also must think of Christ, forgive those who have wronged us, and try still harder to be unselfish and kind.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CAROL

In England on Christmas eve boys and girls and men and women go about the streets singing Christmas carols, or songs, at the doors of people's houses, and the people for whom they sing give them tokens of their good-will. The first verse of one of the oldest and best Christmas carols is as follows:

"God rest you merry, gentlemen;
Let nothing you dismay,
For Christ was born of Mary
Upon a Christmas Day."

That is a very beautiful carol, but there is one still more beautiful. It is the one the angels sang the night that Christ was born:

"Glory to God in the highest,
Peace on earth to men of good-will."

This means that people who have good-will in their hearts toward other people will have peace on earth. And how very true that is! People generally act toward us the same

way in which we act toward them. If we are cross, others are cross; but if we are warm-hearted and loving, then people are warm-hearted toward us. It is just like seeing your face in a looking-glass. If you frown, the face in the mirror will frown. If your face is smiling, the one in the mirror will be smiling. That is another way of saying that you get what you give.

Christ came into the world to teach us how to have good-will to men, and from our good-will to get happiness. Any boy or girl who faithfully tries to be like Christ, and to do as he believes Jesus would do if He were in his place, will grow to have this good-will in his heart. Then some day he will sing as the angels did, "Glory to God in the highest," for he will know God's peace. Christ said, "Blessed are the peace-makers."

Here is a verse for you to take as a motto:

"Where are you going? Never mind.
Just follow the road that says, 'Be kind,'
And do the duty that nearest you lies,
For that is the road to Paradise."

A HINT FROM A CARIBOU

THIS is an animal-story. It is about a caribou. A caribou is a kind of reindeer, and lives in Canada.

One day a man was out in a stumpy pasture-field beside a woods in Canada, and he saw a mother caribou and her little calf feeding quietly down in a valley nearby.

He was on a little hill some distance away, but the wind was blowing in the direction of the caribou. Presently the mother caribou raised her head, sniffed the air, and looked in the direction where the man was hidden behind a stump. She had caught the scent of a human being. That meant danger to her calf. Soon the mother caribou, leaving her calf in the valley, started in the direction of the man. He slipped from his hiding-place to another stump. On came the caribou till she reached the very stump behind which the man had first hidden. There she smelled the ground,

and then a strange thing happened. She called her calf to her, had it smell the ground, too, so as to get the scent of the man. When that was done, she got behind that little caribou and butted it down the valley as fast as it could go. Why did she do that? It was to teach her calf that whenever it got that scent on the air, there was danger, and it must get away as quickly as possible.

Ever after that, even before the calf knew that this scent belonged to a man, or had seen a man, it would run away from it.

Your parents are constantly doing for you what that mother caribou did for her little one. When they tell you that such and such a thing is wrong, and you must not do it; when again they tell you there is danger in going to a certain place, or in chumming with a particular boy or girl, they are again doing the same thing for you. And when they punish you, as that mother caribou did her calf, it is because they know the danger far better than you, and they know that your safety depends upon keeping away from such things.

Then, bye and bye, perhaps, as you grow older, you will begin to see for yourself what the danger meant, just as the little caribou might some day see a hunter for itself. And then you will no longer think your parents cruel or strict; you will be thankful that they were so wise and kind.

THE REPENTANCE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON

When you begin to study English literature you will hear a great deal about Samuel Johnson, who wrote one of the first English dictionaries, and was a great scholar. Johnson's father was a bookseller, who used to have a little shop in the market-place, where he sold books on market-days. One day, when Johnson was a boy, his father took sick and asked Samuel to go to the market-place and sell books for him. Johnson was ashamed of such work, and refused to go.

But many years afterward, when he had become an old man and was back on a visit to his native village, he was missed from breakfast one morning by the friends with whom he was staying. On his return at supper-time he told his friends how he had spent the day. It was fifty years ago that day when he had refused to help his father. He says: "To do

away with the sin of this disobedience, I this day went in a post-chaise to Uttoxeter, and going into the market at the time of high business, uncovered my head and stood with it bare an hour before the stall which my father had formerly used, exposed to the sneers of standers-by and the inclemency of the weather; a penance by which I trust I have propitiated Heaven for this only instance, I believe, of contumacy to my father."

That is a story worth remembering when you are ashamed of doing something which your parents have asked you to do, perhaps to carry a parcel on the street or to mow the lawn. You will see sometime, I hope, that all honest work, if it is well done, is a thing to be proud of, instead of to be ashamed of. But it may be too late then. Your parents may have died, and you, like Johnson, will come back with deep sorrow to think how you had disobeyed and forsaken them when they needed you. The way to save yourselves such heart-ache is to be obedient to your parents as long as they live.

EASTER

ONCE upon a time a Persian king was marching westward with a great army to fight against Greece. In the evening, after the army had encamped for the night, someone found the king looking over the host of people spread out before him, and he was in tears. When he was asked the cause of his sadness, he replied that he had been thinking that one hundred years from that time not one of all these men in his army would be alive.

That was long before Christ lived, and had risen from the dead on Easter morning. These people had no Easter. They did not believe in the sort of everlasting life in which we believe. And even long after the resurrection of Christ there were many people in Greece and Rome who had not heard the wonderful news. Here is a letter that someone wrote over a hundred years after that first Easter to a mother whose son had just died:

"I was much grieved, and shed as many tears over your son as I did over my own, and I did everything that was fitting, as so did my whole family. . . . But still there is nothing one can do in the face of such trouble. So I leave you to comfort yourselves. Good-bye."

If these people had known about our Easter they would not have felt so hopeless and sad. For since Christ has risen from the dead, we know that all who love Him and try to be like Him shall also rise from the dead, and be with Him in a life beyond the grave.

He said to His disciples before He was crucified: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." When we know this, then to die is not so terrible as it was to the Persians and Greeks. It is like going to sleep in our home, and waking up in a place

much more beautiful than we had ever dreamed of, and being with Christ, the Friend of little children, forever. But we must know Christ in this life if we are to enjoy His friendship in the next.

THE WHISPERING GALLERY

If you ever go to London, one of the many buildings which will be pointed out to you will be Saint Paul's Cathedral, which is capped by a wonderful dome. And if you ask the guide, he will show you in that dome a strange room known as the "Whispering Gallery." In this gallery your lowest whisper can be heard on the other side of the room, a great distance away. It would be hard to tell secrets in a room like that.

But there is a still more wonderful whispering gallery than that. It is the one which each one of us carries about in his own soul. In that gallery even things we *think,* whether we say them or not, are heard by God, our Creator. No thought escapes Him. "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." If we "take the wings of the morning, and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth," even there God is still.

This would be a very terrible thing to realize if all our thoughts were evil thoughts, unkind and unlovely. For then we should be like the man who, when he was young, ill-treated his old father and mother. When he grew up, this young man became very wealthy, and he used to carry candy in his pocket as he walked in the parks to give to the children, because he wanted their love. But the children would take his candy, then scamper away like frightened squirrels, because something inside seemed to tell them that the man was not really kind at heart. Older people felt the same way about him, and a chill came over them when they were with him. So they avoided him. It would be unbearable to think that only our evil thoughts were open to God in that way.

But while God knows all the wickedness in our hearts, and we cannot hide anything from Him, God also knows the good thoughts that are whispered in the gallery of our soul. And when we wish ever so greatly that we could do something to help somebody, but cannot do it; or when we would like to be good, but are

tripped up by some temptation, God knows then how hard we try, and gives us credit for our effort, even though we fail to do what we wanted to.

Let us remember the Whispering Gallery of the soul, then, and when we think evil thoughts, even though we never tell them to our nearest friend, let us be sure God knows them. And when we try hard to be good and to do good, but fail, let us also remember that God sees it, even though none else knows. Our prayer each morning ought to be like the psalmist's: "Let the words of my mouth, and the *meditations of my heart* be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer."

THE HE-SAID GIRL

SOMETIMES, when I am walking along the street, I catch snatches of conversation as I pass by a group of little girls. And often I hear the phrase "He said" this, or "He said" that. There are girls who do not seem to talk about much else but what this boy or that boy has said, and these girls I call "he-said" girls.

Now, of course it is all right for girls to think about the boys. We could not stop that if we would, and we would not stop it if we could. The danger comes when a girl thinks of little else. The girl who begins by devoting all her thought to boys is apt to end by being a very unattractive and unpopular sort of woman. Every girl ought to get along well with the girls of her own age as well as with the boys. There is something wrong with the girl who cannot get along with her girl friends. And so I say to you that if you do not want to be thoroughly unhappy as a woman, try to win the friendship of girls as well as boys.

A good plan for the "he-said" girl is to take her father as her ideal, and hero and lover. Then, as she grows to womanhood, she will not be satisfied with any man who is not in some measure as good as her father. In the meanwhile beware of being a "he-said" girl.

ON DECK

WHEN I was a boy I belonged to a baseball team in the village where I lived, and when we played games with a team from another village we had a scorer who not only kept tally of the runs, but also told us who was to be the next at the bat. He would say, "So-and-so is at the bat, So-and-so is on deck." And when he told a boy he was "on deck," that boy knew he was to be the next one at the bat.

Boys and girls are always on deck, whether they are playing ball or not, for a boy or girl never knows when he is going to be called upon to play some part in the game called Life. And the strange thing about it is, there is no scorer who tells you that you are on deck. So you never get any warning, and you may be on deck and not know it, and so miss your chance.

Samuel, for instance, was a boy who used to close the curtains and put out the candles

at night in the temple away back hundreds of years before Christ was born. One evening he had put out the lights and closed the curtains, just the same as he had a hundred times before, and then lay down to sleep. He little thought that this particular day he was on deck, and was to be called into the game by God. But that night God called him, and sent him on a very important errand that was to change his whole life and the history of his people.

And things like that are happening in America to-day. I read a story the other day of a young student who was overtaken by a rainstorm, and borrowed an umbrella of a lawyer. He returned it a few days later with a note of thanks. Not long afterward he received a letter from the lawyer offering him a position in his office on account of his good handwriting. The student took the position, kept on with his studies in college, and after he graduated from college went right along in that office till he became a man of influence. He didn't know what it meant when he wrote that note. He was on deck.

The lesson that I want to draw is this: That you must be on the lookout and do well the things that come to you each day, for who knows but you may be on deck that very day, and be called to play some important part? For only those are called who are on deck; that is, ready to play. The boy or girl who does not do his work well day by day may miss his chance of being called to take some larger place in life when the times comes. Take this motto from the Old Testament: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

THE TERROR BY NIGHT

In some parts of Canada, where the country is still thinly settled by people, wild animals are quite numerous. In one of these communities there once lived a boy who was in the village late one night. He had been at the village-store, and had heard the men talking about a wildcat that had been seen in that neighbourhood a short time before.

The boy was not a coward, but when he started for his home, three miles away, in the country, he was nervous. Nothing happened, however, until he was climbing over a set of bars at the end of a lane leading through a piece of woods near his home. Then he heard the bushes moving and twigs crackling under the feet of some animal the other side of the lane-fence. He thought of the wildcat. He jumped to the ground, picked up a heavy stick he had seen under a tree on his way through that day and listened. Nearer and nearer came

the rustling of the bushes, and every little while he could hear an animal sniff the air. Finally it came to the fence, clambered up opposite him. The boy raised his club and waited, and when the animal jumped down beside him, its eyes shining in the darkness, he struck with all his might. Off the beast went into the darkness. All was silence again, and the boy stood listening and trembling. Then from the top of a nearby hill he heard a dog howl with pain. He found, next morning, that it was only a neighbour's dog that had frightened him so.

That boy is not the only one who has seen things mistakenly, just because he was afraid. If you are dreading something, you will think that everything that happens brings the thing you dread. Usually nothing happens at all. The trouble was only in the person's mind, just as that wildcat was in the boy's mind, and so every noise he could not explain was a wildcat.

I am sure David must have known something about that fear when, as a boy, he watched his sheep out on the lonely hills at night. But David learned that there was One

who was able to protect him by night as well as by day. It was God. And so he wrote of God: "He that keepeth thee will not slumber. God is thy keeper. God is thy shade upon thy right hand. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; for the pestilence that walketh in darkness. . . . It shall not come nigh thee."

Let us remember that no real harm can come to us unless it comes from within ourselves. God is our protector. In His love we can trust by day, and in His care we can lay us down to sleep at night without a fear.

THE BRAMBLE-BUSH KING

THERE is a story in the Old Testament which says that once upon a time the trees gathered together to choose a king to rule over them.

First they invited the olive-tree; but the olive-tree said it was too busy bearing fruit. Then they asked the fig-tree to be king; but the fig-tree had its work to do, and also declined. Next they waited upon the vine with an invitation; but, like the others, it did not wish to be their king.

Finally the trees asked the bramble to accept the position, and the bramble gladly agreed. The first order it gave was for all the trees to take shelter under its branches or be burned with fire. That sounds just like a prickly, thorny, little bramble, does it not?

That is usually the way of people who like to lord it over other people when they have no ability for it. There are some who want to do so when they are at a party. They want to

be the hitching-post to which all the people are tied when they talk. If the bramble takes the form of a boy, he wants to be captain of his team, or he will not play. If it happens to be a girl, she insists upon everybody playing the game she wants, or she will go home in a sulk. These people cannot agree long with anybody. They are quarrelsome and peevish.

Some boys and girls are like horses: they make good single-drivers, but they will not work with anyone else. Some horses go well enough alone, but when you hitch them with another horse they crowd, or bite, or kick it. They cannot "go double," as we say. That is the bramble-nature showing out in a horse.

This is a bad trait, whether you find it in a horse, a man or woman, a boy or girl. Christ says: "You know the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them. Not so shall it be among you; but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant." Jesus also said, "I am meek and lowly in heart.' So must all His followers be.

If you are getting any of the bramble-nature, and want to lord it over everybody, you had better give it up. Some of the unhappiest people in the world are bramble-bush kings.

WHERE IS HEAVEN?

Our great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers used to talk much about where heaven was. And some thought it was up above the clouds, and others thought it would be here on earth, after all the wickedness and selfishness were done away. Every one, however, used to think that the New Jerusalem, with its pearly gates and golden streets, was a real place like the cities of to-day.

But we think of heaven more as the feeling in our hearts when we are happy from being with our friends, or when we have done right and unselfish things. We know what it is, then, to have heaven on earth. And when we have heaven on earth, we know pretty nearly what the real heaven is like.

Let me show you what I mean. Not long ago a speaker in a rescue mission asked the children if they could tell him where heaven was. Immediately a boy from the poorest section of the city sprang up, raised his hand

and cried shrilly: "I know; I know." "Well, my boy, where is heaven?" the astonished leader asked. "Back in our street since mother got acquainted with Jesus," was the answer.

That boy was on the right track. Whenever Christ comes into the heart there comes with Him love and thoughtfulness of others. And when we do kind things for others, we find happiness for ourselves, and that is heaven. Christ says, "If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him and he with me." That means, when we do things that we believe Christ would like to have us do, then He comes in to sup with us. And when we feel Christ as our Companion, then it is heaven.

We may go to a beautiful place called heaven when we die, but it will be Christ who will make the place full of joy and gladness. And if we are to see Him in that land and enjoy that heaven, we must first make a heaven here on earth for ourselves and others by trying to please Him and to be like Him every day.

THE CHRISTIAN ARMY

SAINT PAUL, in writing to the Christians of his day, urges them to be "good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ." If every Christian is a soldier, then the Church ought to be called "the Christian Army." And this makes plainer to us what it means to join the Church.

Armies, as you know, are divided into regiments, and regiments into companies. Every soldier in the army belongs to a certain company. If a man said that he wanted to belong to the United States Army, but that he did not want to join any particular regiment or company, but that he intended to be a soldier "in general," people would laugh at him. He would be like a man who took his gun and went out all alone to fight against Spain when we were at war with her. Or it would be as if a man in a city should say that he wanted to fight fire, but instead of joining a fire company, he would snatch up his pail and run alone to put out the fire every time there was an alarm.

Now, in the Christian army there are also regiments and companies. The different denominations, like the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Baptists, the Congregationalists, and so on, are the regiments. The Churches like this and other Churches are the companies in the army.

So, when anyone says he wants to make war on wickedness and to bring in the reign of love and peace and good-will which Christ started His Church to fight for, we ask him to join one of the companies of the Christian army. That is, we ask him to join a Church.

You may ask if one cannot be a Christian outside of the Church. I answer, Yes, he can. But he is very much like the man with his pail running to put out the fire, or the lone soldier. He can do better work if he works with others. Furthermore, Christ said, "He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven, and he that denieth me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven." In joining the Church you confess Christ.

You may ask me too, how old one should be before he can join the Christian army, known as the Church of God. I answer, there is no set age. Some boys and girls are ready to join before others. One little girl who was going to join the Church was told by some of the members of her Sunday-school class that she wasn't old enough. She replied, "Anyone who is old enough to know right from wrong is old enough to join the Church." If you are trying honestly day by day to be like Christ and to do His will, and you wish to be a better soldier of the cross, then you are ready to join the Church.

In the Christian army there are old and young, rich and poor, wise and simple, all under the one flag,—the banner of the Cross; all under the one Captain,—even Jesus Christ. And the best thing about our Captain is, He has never lost a battle yet, and never will. All those who enlist under His flag are sure to win, and to hear God's "Well done."

XVI
YUIII

Date Due			
Je 2 '38	[redacted]		
N 28 '38	[redacted]		
Jl 29 '39	[redacted]		
S 29 '39	[redacted] MAY 25		
My 27 '40			
Mr 5- '41	MAY 25 1950		
N 28 '41			
F 1- '42			
F 2- '42			
Ap 23 '42			
Je 6 '44			
Je 20 '45			
NO 12'51			
FE 25'52			
JE 1 '53			
[redacted]			
[redacted]			

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library
1 1012 01035 2310